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HUNTING BIN LADEN

**OSAMA BIN LADEN***A Chronology of His Political Life*

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INTRODUCTION

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1957	Osama bin Muhammad bin Awad bin Laden is born in Riyadh. He is 17th of 52 children sired by Muhammad Bin Laden-- Saudi Arabia's wealthiest construction magnate.
1979	Bin Laden graduates from King Abdul Aziz University in Jiddah with a degree in civil engineering.
December 26, 1979	Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Bin Laden leaves Saudi Arabia to join the Afghan resistance (mujahedeen).
1980-86	From the Pakistani border, bin Laden raises funds and provides the mujahedeen with logistical and humanitarian aid.
1986-89	According to Islamic sources, bin Laden participates in numerous battles during the Afghan war against the Soviets as a guerilla commander, including the fierce battle of Jalalabad which led the Soviets to finally withdraw from Afghanistan.
1988	Bin Laden establishes " <b>al Qaeda</b> ," an organization of ex-mujahedeen and other supporters. Its mission is to channel fighters and funds to the Afghan resistance.
June 30, 1989	The National Islamic Front (NIF) stages a military coup and takes control of the Sudan.
1989	After the Soviets pull out of Afghanistan, bin Laden returns to Saudi Arabia a hero. He becomes involved in opposition movements to the Saudi monarchy while working for his family construction firm, the Bin Laden Group.
August 2, 1990	Iraq invades Kuwait.
April, 1991	Bin Laden flees Saudi Arabia, after being confined to Jiddah for his opposition to the Saudi alliance with the United States. He moves first to Afghanistan and then to Khartoum, Sudan by 1992 (Source: <u>Newsweek</u> 2/1/99). Sudan had begun to allow any Muslim into the country without a visa, in a display of Islamic solidarity. Allegedly, hundreds of suspected terrorists and ex-mujahedeen come to Sudan as a safe haven (Source: <u>New York Times</u> 9/21/98).

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FROM THE HOME

- 1991 US troops fight Persian Gulf War. After victory, the US establishes a large permanent military presence in the region, including Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is the land of "the two most holy places" in Islam--Mecca and Medina.
- 1992 According to the current indictment against bin Laden, from 1992 on, bin Laden and other Al Qaeda members stated privately within the organization that a) Al Qaeda should put aside its differences with Shiite Muslim terrorist organizations, including Iran and its affiliated terrorist group Hezbollah, to cooperate against the perceived common enemy, the United States and its allies; b) the US forces stationed on the Saudi peninsula, including both Saudi Arabia and Yemen, should be attacked; and c) the US forces stationed in the Horn of Africa, including Somalia, should be attacked.
- Bin Laden begins to set up legitimate businesses in the Sudan, including a tannery, two large farms, and a major road construction company. When Saudi Arabia began pressuring Pakistan to get rid of the mujahedeen near the border with Afghanistan, bin Laden reportedly paid for 480 Afghan vets to come work with him. The Sudanese leaders liked this wealthy Saudi who was enthusiastic about investing in their fledgling Islamic state.
- December 29, 1992 A bomb explodes in a hotel in Aden, Yemen, where US troops had been staying while en route to a humanitarian mission in Somalia. The bomb killed two Austrian tourists; the U.S. soldiers had already left. Two Yemeni Muslim militants, trained in Afghanistan and injured in the blast, are later arrested. US intelligence agencies allege that this was the first terrorist attack involving bin Laden and his associates (Source: New York Times 8/21/98).
- 1993 Sudan is placed on State Department's list of countries that sponsor terrorist activities (Source: Washington Post 8/23/98).
- According to US government charges, bin Laden's followers try to obtain components of nuclear weapons and begin to work with Sudan's NIF to develop chemical arms (Source: US News and World Report 10/5/98).
- February 26, 1993 World Trade Center bombing.
- October 3 & 4th, 1993 Eighteen US troops are killed in an urban attack in Mogadishu, Somalia. American law enforcement, intelligence and national security officials are divided as to whether, as a federal indictment charges, bin Laden and his adherents helped train and arm the men who killed the US troops (Source: New York

Times 2/8/99).

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| January 1994        | According to US intelligence analysts, by January 1994, bin Laden was financing at least three terrorist training camps in North Sudan, where rebels from a half-dozen nations received training. (Source: <u>New York Times</u> 8/14/96)   |
| April 9, 1994       | The Saudi government revokes bin Laden's citizenship and moves to freeze his assets in Saudi Arabia because of his support for Muslim fundamentalist movements. (Source: <u>New York Times</u> 4/10/94)   |
| 1995                | According to U.S. intelligence sources, bin Laden establishes extensive training and housing operations for foreign guerillas in northern Yemen near Saudi border. (Source: <u>Washington Post</u> 8/23/98)   |
| February/March 1995 | Ramzi Yousef, mastermind of the World Trade Center bombing, is captured in Pakistan and extradited to the United States. A search of his former residences leads investigators to believe he is financially linked to bin Laden. Also, he had stayed at a bin Laden financed guest house while in Pakistan. |
| June 1995           | Unsuccessful assassination attempt on the life of the President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, in Addis Ababa. U.S. intelligence sources believe bin Laden was somehow linked.  |
| August, 1995        | Bin Laden wrote an open letter to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia calling for a campaign of guerrilla attacks in order to drive U.S forces out of the kingdom.  |
| November 13, 1995   | Five Americans and two Indians are killed in the truck bombing of a US-operated Saudi National Guard training center in Riyadh. Bin Laden denies involvement but praises the attack (Source: <u>Washington Post</u> 8/23/98).   |
| May 1996            | The Sudan expels bin Laden because of international pressure by the United States and Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden then moves back to Afghanistan. (Source: <u>Jane's Intelligence Review</u> 10/1/98)   |
| May 31, 1996        | The four Saudi men accused of bombing the Saudi National Guard training center in Riyadh are beheaded in Riyadh's main square. Before their execution, they are coerced by the Saudi's into a public confession. In the confession, they claim to have read bin Laden communiqués.                          |
| Spring 1996         | President Clinton signed a top secret order that authorized the CIA to use any and all means to destroy bin Laden's network.  |
| June 25, 1996       | A large truck bomb devastates the US military residence in  |

Dhahran called Khobar Towers, killing 19 servicemen. The US military initially linked bin Laden to the attack but now believe a Saudi Shiite group was responsible (Source: Washington Post 8/23/98). U.S. investigators still believe bin Laden was somehow involved.

August, 1996 A secret grand jury investigation begins against Osama bin Laden in New York.

August 23, 1996 Bin Laden **signed and issued a Declaration of Jihad** outlining his organization's goals: drive US forces from the Arabian Peninsula, overthrow the Government of Saudi Arabia, liberate Muslim holy sites, and support Islamic revolutionary groups around the world. He declares that Saudis have the right to strike at US troops in the Persian Gulf.



osama bin laden

November, 1996 Gwynne Roberts conducts interview of bin Laden for the British documentary program Dispatches. Bin Laden threatens to wage an Islamic holy war against the United States and its allies if Washington does not remove its troops from the Gulf region (Source: Reuters 2/20/97).

May 1997 CNN airs an interview with bin Laden in which he criticizes US "occupation of the land of the holy places."

July 1997 According to Islamic sources, a US-backed multinational mercenary force is formed with the aim of abducting or killing bin Laden. Witnesses claim to see 11 black Land Cruisers crossing into the Afghan city of Khost along with 2 helicopters. A source said force was composed of 1000 non-US mercenaries. (Source: Mideast Mirror 7/14/97--al-Hayat & al-Arab)

February 1998 Bin Laden issues **joint declaration** with the Islamic Group, Al Jihad, the Jihad Movement in Bangladesh and the "Jamaat ul Ulema e Pakistan" under the banner of the "World Islamic Front," which stated that Muslims should kill Americans including civilians--anywhere in the world.

May 1998 ABC's **John Miller interviews bin Laden** in Afghanistan.

June 1998 A raid is conducted in Albania against a cell of an Islamic terrorist movement by security personnel from the U.S. and

- Albania. Two suspected employees of bin Laden are arrested. The CIA takes custody of a van-load of documents and computer gear. Two weeks later, another raid was conducted and two more suspected bin Laden associates arrested. They were Egyptian nationals and were turned over to anti- terrorist officials in Egypt. All were associated with the Islamic Revival Foundation. (Source: Washington Post 8/12/98)
- June 8, 1998 The grand jury investigation of bin Laden, initiated in 1996, issues a sealed indictment, charging Bin Laden with "conspiracy to attack defense utilities of the United States." Prosecutors charge that bin Laden heads a terrorist organization called al Qaeda, the base, and was a major financier of Islamic terrorists around the world.
- June 10, 1998 ABC Nightline John Miller interview with bin Laden broadcast.
- August 6, 1998 The Egyptian Jihad group sent the United States a warning: they would soon deliver a message to Americans "which we hope they read with care, because we will write it, with God's help, in a language they will understand." (Source: New York Times 8/21/98)
- August 7, 1998 This is the eighth year anniversary of United Nations sanctions against Iraq and the ordering of U.S. troops into the Gulf region. Iraq informed the US Security Council that it was not going to tolerate the continuation of the sanctions beyond the eighth year anniversary. (Source: Daily Telegraph 8/12/98)
- Two simultaneous **explosions at US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania**. The bomb in Nairobi, Kenya kills 213 people, including 12 US nationals, and injure more than 4,500 . The bomb in Dar es Salaam kills 11 and injures 85. No Americans died in the Tanzania bombing.
- August 12, 1998 The Small Group of presidential advisors meet with Clinton, reportedly with evidence that bin Laden is looking to obtain weapons of mass destruction and chemical weapons to use against US installations (Source: New York Times 9/23/98). US intelligence also reportedly intercepted a mobile phone conversation between two of bin Laden's lieutenants that implicated them in the embassy bombings. (Source: Newsweek 8/31/98)
- August 20, 1998



*sudanese factory attacked by u.s. missiles*

**US retaliation against bin Laden**--cruise missiles attack a suspected terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and Al Shifa, a pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum. US intelligence claims that Al Shifa is tied to the production of chemical weapons for bin Laden. The Sudanese government vehemently denied these claims.

US adds bin Laden's name to list of terrorists whose funds are targeted for seizure by US Treasury in order to shut down the financial pipelines that allegedly subsidize bin Laden's terrorist activities. (Source: Washington Post 8/28/98)

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| September 23, 1998 | US senior administrative officials admit that they had no evidence that directly linked bin Laden to the Al Shifa factory at the time of retaliatory strikes on Aug 20. Intelligence officials found financial transactions between bin Laden and the Military Industrial Corporation--a company run by the Sudan's government. (Source: <u>New York Times</u> 9/23/98)  |
| October 1998       | The Sunday Times of London reports that bin Laden is sending Islamic mercenaries to Kashmir to support an Islamic secession campaign.  |
| October 7, 1998    | Arabic newspaper al-Hayat claims bin Laden has acquired nuclear weapons from Soviet Central Asian countries using a network of "influential friends". Others are skeptical. (Source: UPI 10/7/98)  |
| November 4, 1998   | A new superceding <b>indictment</b> is issued against bin Laden, Muhammad Atef and a host of other suspects. They are charged with bombing of two US embassies and conspiring to commit other acts of terrorism against Americans abroad. Two rewards of \$5 million each are offered for Atef and bin Laden. Atef is described as bin Laden's chief military commander. |
| December 22, 1998  | Bin Laden summons Rahimullah Yusufzai, a reporter for Pakistan's The News, Time Magazine and John Miller of ABC News, to his tented encampment in Afghanistan's Helmand province for interviews.   |
| December 23,       | TIME correspondent conducts interview with Osama bin   |

1998	Laden.
December 24, 1998	ABC's second interview with Osama bin Laden is broadcast on ABC News.
January 11, 1999	TIME and Newsweek publish interviews with Osama bin Laden that were conducted in late December.
January 16, 1999	The US Attorney's office files its most complete indictment to date of Osama bin Laden and 11 other suspected members of his terrorist organization. The grand jury charges the men for conspiring to kill American nationals. The first count of the indictment charges that several of the co-defendants, acted with other members of " <b>al Qaeda</b> ," a worldwide terrorist organization led by bin Laden, in a conspiracy to murder American citizens. The objectives of the terrorist group allegedly include: killing members of the American military stationed in Saudi Arabia and Somalia; killing United States embassy employees in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and concealing the activities of the co-conspirators by, among other things, establishing front companies, providing false identity and travel documents, engaging in coded correspondence, and providing false information to the authorities in various countries.
May 29, 2001	Four followers of Osama bin Laden are found guilty of charges stemming from the 1998 US embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. Mohamed Rashed Daoud Al-Owhali, Khalfan Khamis Mohamed, Mohammed Sadiq Odeh, and Wadih El Hage are convicted of charges including murder, conspiracy and perjury after a nine-week federal trial during which prosecutors called over 90 witnesses, including al Qaeda informants and survivors of the bombings. Owhali and Mohamed face the death penalty at their sentencing, while Odeh and El Hage face life in prison.

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